

# The Mobster

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## DEPLOYMENT THUS FAR

### Ensign Natalie Woodward, USN

The MOBILE BAY is older and saltier than John Paul Jones himself, but she is running strong after nearly 60 days of deployment 2011 under her belt. Watch standers have been up all hours of the night and day keeping her safe, our Operations Officer has not slept since we left home port San Diego, and the Air Department is finally starting to fit in with the crew. With div-tacs, plane guard, flashing

light drills, underway replenishments every couple days, and UFO sightings, it is amazing that the Captain has time for his nightly cigar on the Bridge Wing. But in all seriousness, we are almost two months into deployment and have only one port visit under our belts. Welcome to the USS MOBILE BAY.

Although this much loved ship, Commissioned in 1987, is old and patched up,

she has been running pretty nicely for us. So far, we have had no major casualties, thanks to the hard working Engineering Department, and everyone seems to be on the up and up. The Admiral has been over to visit a few times and has highly encouraged the Cross Deck Program where a few lucky sailors get to go over to the Aircraft Carrier for a short

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## Deployment Thus Far (continued)



Time and see what life is like on another ship. Overall the program has been a huge success. Every sailor that has returned has had only positive things to say about their experience and has genuinely learned something about the Navy that was unknown to them prior to cross-decking.

Another big event thus far was our recent 9-11 Memorial service where the entire crew stood in ranks on the flight deck while we listened to stories told of that devastating day straight from the eyes of a New Yorker who experienced the tragedy first hand. We also held a moment of silence honoring those who had died that day while serving our country, followed by a 21 gun salute. Our Commanding Officer, Captain Halvorson, and the Commander of Carrier Strike Group Three, Admiral Faller, both spoke at the conclusion of the ceremony, giving solemn yet encouraging remarks about those who have gone before us and about what is coming up ahead of us. They talked about the war we are fighting and the reasons for that war. They talked about our duty to our country and what a privilege it is to stand ready to fight for Freedom and Democracy. Every sailor on this ship left the ceremony knowing and feeling pride for the United States Military, and pride

for America.

That being said, we have also had some very fun and light hearted times since leaving on that sunny July day from San Diego, California. Deployment morale lifted when no-shave chits broke

out and the beloved Grizzly Man competition began. And we all knew that deployment was official once we missed our first liberty port due to bad weather and had another week underway without setting foot on land. The food has already begun to taste good, but that's mainly because remnants of real home cooked food have just about disappeared from our taste buds and memories. Deployment diet promises and weight loss goals have vanished quicker than a New Years Eve resolution and the ship store is out of Teddy Grahams and Oreo Cakesters within 30 minutes of opening up every morning. Thankfully we haven't had to ration our water yet, but at the ratio of days underway to days in port being 1:50, I'm sure water rationing will become familiar to the crew quite soon. To top it off, on a typical night, two hours after you shut your eyes, some sort of light will shine right in your eyes and you'll hear someone mumble, "Sorry, wrong rack," and then continue banging around until the person sought is found. Haircuts from the barber shop are so faded they are comical

for the first week or so, and 18 scoops of coffee are used per pot and then it is allowed to sit for five or six hours before drinking...Navy coffee at its finest!

MWR has done a good job at planning evening events for the crew. Movie nights, karaoke, and ice cream socials have been in effect throughout the past couple weeks, which are always big morale boosters. With how hard this crew works, they deserve every ounce of down time they can get. I have never seen such hardworking and selfless people devote every ounce of effort to such a great cause. Every sailor on this ship works night and day to make sure we are operational and ready to complete our mission every single day, which is more than can be said for any businessman, lawyer, or salesclerk back at home in America, who are out of harms way.

If there is one thing I could say that drives the point home about our deployment experience thus far it is this: MOBILE BAY has worked day and night for the last 50 days and stands ready to complete every mission handed to us until we return safely to America. Sleep well tonight fellow Americans, and remember those men and women who have gone before us, giving their lives for our freedom.





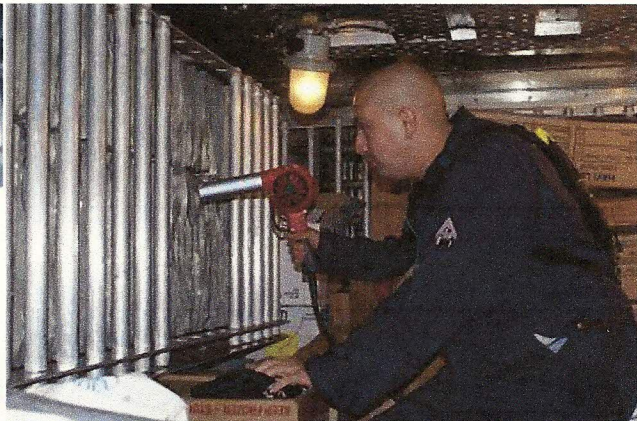


**DC3 McCloskey and GM1 Rodriguez, along with their fellow Sailors aid a Malaysian Orphanage in correcting a broken piping system.**



**MOBILE BAY Sailors spend time with Malaysian Orphans as part of COMSERVE 2011.**





SAILORS OF THE WEEK

